



NEWS RELEASE
*Office of the
United States Attorney
for the
District of Nebraska*
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November 1, 2010

United States Attorney Deborah R. Gilg and the United States Postal Inspection Service announce the following information for the attention of the media:

Event Triggering this Release:

Bryan S. Behrens, age 47, of Omaha, was sentenced by Senior United States District Court Judge Lyle E. Strom to a 60 month prison term following Behrens' conviction for Securities Fraud. In addition to the prison term, Palmer was ordered to serve 3 years of supervised release, and ordered to pay \$6,800,000.00 in restitution to the victims of his fraudulent scheme.

Bryan S. Behrens was the President and Chief Financial Officer of 21st Century Financial Group, Inc. (21st Century) located in Omaha, Nebraska. Behrens owned and operated 21st Century which was in the business of providing financial planning advice, as well as various insurance and investment products. In or around 2002, Behrens purchased a Nevada shell corporation called National Investments, Inc., (NII), purportedly an investment company in the business of investing in Nevada real estate. NII was owned, operated and controlled solely by Behrens.

As a result of the scheme to defraud, approximately twenty (20) victims suffered a total loss of approximately six million eight hundred thousand dollars (\$6,800,000.00). The scheme involved Behrens soliciting millions of dollars under false pretenses, failing to invest investors' funds as promised, and involved Behrens misappropriating and converting investors' funds to his other business entities and for his own personal use without the knowledge or authorization of the victim investors.

Behrens promised, in return for his client/victims' investments in NII, an entity supposedly involved in purchasing real estate in the State of Nevada, that they would receive a seven to nine percent return on their investment. Behrens typically documented the investment with a promissory note issued by NII stating the fixed return of seven to nine percent to be paid to the victim investor and promising to pay their return in monthly installments. In reality, Behrens did not invest victim investors' funds in any Nevada real estate or any safe or no-risk investment, but instead diverted substantial amounts of victim investors' funds to financially prop up and support

his other fledgling business interests and entities. He also used later victim investors' funds to pay money owed to earlier investors, (a "Ponzi" scheme), and he also misappropriated victim investors' funds to pay for his and his family's personal expenses and to support a lavish lifestyle. This lavish lifestyle included the purchase of a second home, upgrades and renovations of his two homes and the purchase/lease of several luxury automobiles and jewelry. He also used converted funds to purchase a "Husker" bus that was used to transport friends and family to tailgating parties at University of Nebraska home football games.

Many of the victims were prior insurance and security clients of Behrens. He advised them to cash out their existing annuities and/or investment accounts resulting, in some instances, in the payment of significant surrender fees and adverse tax consequences, and told them to transfer their money into NII. He further advised many of the investors that there was no risk and that their investments were safe and backed by well known established insurance companies when, in truth and in fact, NII was not investing funds, nor was its existence even known to the various established insurance companies that Behrens represented.

As a result of Behrens' scheme and artifice to defraud, approximately twenty (20) investors suffered a total aggregate loss of approximately six million eight hundred thousand dollars (\$6,800,000.00).

Name of Defendant: Bryan S. Behrens

AKA:

Age: 47

City of residence: Omaha

Crime(s) Charged and Potential Penalty (A CHARGE is merely an accusation and every defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty): Securities Fraud, in violation of Title 15, United States Code, Sections 78j(b) and 78ff, and Title 17, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 240.10(b)-5. Penalty of up to 20 years imprisonment, \$1,000,000 fine, or both imprisonment and fine, not more than 5 years of supervised release and a \$100 special assessment.

Specific Location of Alleged Crime: Omaha

Location of Arrest: N/A

Alleged Dollar Loss/Type and Quantity of Drug: \$6,800,000

Others Charged in Same Scheme: N/A

Relevant Dates:

Date of Alleged Crime: Beginning on or about January 1, 2002, and continuing until on or about December 31, 2007

Federal Arrest Date: N/A

Date Complaint Issued: N/A

Information Returned Date: N/A

Initial Appearance Date: May 13, 2009

Plea or Trial and Date(s): April 26, 2010

Sentencing Date: November 1, 2010

Next Court Hearing Type and Date: N/A

Assigned Magistrate Judge: Thomas D. Thalken

Held without Bond, or Released from Custody:

In Continuous Custody Since: N/A

Assigned District Court Judge: Lyle E. Strom

Initials of Assigned AUSA/Preparer of THIS Release: RXM